located in West Bengal who had superannuated under VRS. The matter has been taken up with the Ministry of Industry and the administrative Ministry for appropriate action.

Basis of Allotment of Levy Sugar to Various States

2412. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government allots levy sugar to the States on the basis of the population of 1991 census; and

(b) if so, why Government of India cannot allot levy sugar on the basis of projected population of 1996, when the production of sugar is reported to be good?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV):(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Despite improvement in sugar production for the past two sugar seasons (October-September) i.e. 1994-95 and 1995-96, the availability of levy sugar has yet to attain stability to the extent needed for allocating it on the basis of the projected population of 1996.

Identification of new potential coal mines for exploration

2413. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) the capacity of coal mines presently under exploration in the country and how long the coal deposits in these mines are expected to last;

(b) whether Government have taken any action to identify new potential coal mines for exploration;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the deposits are too deep to make mining un-economical;

(e) whether Government have conducted any study to find out the feasibility of direct gasification of coal; and

(f) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) to (c) Geological Survey of India (GSI) has recently carried out/been carrying out regional exploration for coal in 48 blocks/sectors/areas spread over 14 coalfields.

As on 1.1.1996, the coal reserves of India (down to a depth of 1200 metres) have been assessed by the Geological Survey of India at about 202 billion tonnes, out of which about 70.5 billion tonnes fall in the proved category. These coal reserves are likely to last over 100 years even at enhanced rate of production to meet the increased future demand. The quantity of coal mined every day during 1995-96 was 0.9 million tonne, on an average.

(d) The mining of deeper deposits which have to be necessarily worked by underground techniques, in most cases particularly, of the lower grades (D, E & F) under the current price sturcture of coal is proving to be uneconomical.

(e) and (f) A science and technology scheme of underground coal gasification was taken up in collaboration with the erstwhile Union of Soviet Socialist Republic in Merta Road lignite deposits of Rajasthan. The Soviet Experts concluded that the scheme was technologically feasible. However, since the area is solely dependent on acquifers for water source, it was not considered proper to disturb these acquifers in any way.

गुजरात में इस्पात संयंत्र स्थापित करने हेतु भूमि का अधिग्रहण

2414. **श्री गोपाल सिंह जी० सोलंकी:** क्या इस्पात मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने इस्पात संयंत्र स्थापित करने हेतु गुजरात के किसी जिले के अंतर्गत किसी क्षेत्र की पहचान की है;